

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

1-18. (cancelled)

19. (Currently Amended) A medical device, comprising:

a tubular proximal shaft section having a proximal end and a distal end;

a plurality of slits defined in the proximal shaft section;

wherein a greater number of slits are disposed near the distal end of the proximal shaft section than near the proximal end of the proximal shaft section;

a distal shaft section attached to the proximal shaft section, the distal shaft section including a braid attached to the distal end of the proximal shaft section; and

a ~~sheath~~ polymer layer disposed over the proximal and distal shaft sections.

20. (Previously presented) The medical device of claim 19, wherein the distal shaft section is deflectable.

21. (Previously presented) The medical device of claim 19, wherein proximal shaft section has a longitudinal axis and wherein the slits are arranged generally perpendicular to the longitudinal axis.

22. (Previously presented) The medical device of claim 19, wherein the medical device has a transition in stiffness from the proximal shaft section to the distal shaft section.

23. (Cancelled)

24. (Previously presented) The medical device of claim 19, wherein the number of slits per unit length is greater near the distal end of the proximal shaft section than near the proximal end of the proximal shaft section.

25. (Previously presented) The medical device of claim 19, wherein the slits have a first depth near the proximal end of the proximal shaft section and a second depth near the distal end of the proximal shaft section, and wherein the second depth is deeper than the first depth.

26. (Previously presented) The medical device of claim 19, wherein the proximal shaft section is a nickel-titanium alloy tube.

27. (Previously presented) The medical device of claim 19, wherein the braid partially overlaps with the distal end of the proximal shaft section.

28. (Currently Amended) A medical device, comprising:
a proximal shaft portion having a proximal junction and a distal junction;
a plurality of slits defined in the proximal shaft portion;
a braid attached to the distal junction and extending distally therefrom; and
a sheath polymer layer disposed over the proximal shaft portion and the braid.

29. (Previously presented) The medical device of claim 28, wherein the braid defines a distal shaft portion and wherein the distal shaft portion is deflectable.

30. (Previously presented) The medical device of claim 28, wherein the proximal shaft portion has a longitudinal axis and wherein the slits are arranged generally perpendicular to the longitudinal axis.

31. (Previously presented) The medical device of claim 28, wherein the braid defines a distal shaft portion, and wherein the medical device has a transition in stiffness from the proximal shaft portion to the distal shaft portion.

32. (Previously presented) The medical device of claim 28, wherein a greater number of slits are disposed near the distal junction of the proximal shaft portion than near the proximal junction of the proximal shaft portion.

33. (Previously presented) The medical device of claim 28, wherein the number of slits per unit length is greater near the distal junction of the proximal shaft portion than near the proximal junction of the proximal shaft portion.

34. (Previously presented) The medical device of claim 28, wherein the slits have a first depth near the proximal junction of the proximal shaft portion and a second depth near the distal junction of the proximal shaft portion, and wherein the second depth is deeper than the first depth.

35. (Previously presented) The medical device of claim 28, wherein the proximal shaft portion is a nickel-titanium alloy tube.

36. (Previously presented) The medical device of claim 28, wherein the braid partially overlaps with the distal junction of the proximal shaft portion.

37. (Currently amended) A medical device, comprising:
a slotted tubular member having a plurality of slots therein, the slotted tubular member having a proximal end, a distal end, and a longitudinal axis;
wherein the slots vary in number, location, frequency, size, or depth so that the tubular member varies in stiffness between the proximal end and the distal end;
a braid attached to the distal end of the tubular member and extending distally therefrom;
and
a sheath polymer layer disposed over the tubular member and the braid so as to define a catheter shaft.

38. (Previously presented) The medical device of claim 37, wherein the slots defined are arranged generally perpendicular to the longitudinal axis.

39. (Cancelled)

40. (Currently amended) A medical device, comprising:
a catheter shaft including a proximal shaft portion and a distal shaft portion;
the proximal shaft portion having a proximal end, a distal end, a longitudinal axis, and a plurality of slots defined therein that are arranged generally perpendicular to the longitudinal axis;

wherein the slots vary in number, location, frequency, size, or depth so that the proximal shaft portion varies in stiffness between the proximal end and the distal end;

the distal shaft portion including a braid that is attached to and partially overlaps with the distal end of the proximal shaft portion and extends distally from the distal end of the proximal shaft portion; and

a ~~sheath~~ polymer layer disposed over the catheter shaft.

41. (Cancelled)